Ban on import of ash

2821. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the import of ash, waste and scraps of zinc and lead are banned;

(b) if so, since when and the reason for such ban; and

(c) whether any petition was filed in the Apex Court for continuance of import of such material and if so, what is the court's ruling?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) As far as import is concerned, zinc and lead scrap are on Open General Licence (OGL). Zinc ash and skimmings with 65 per cent or above zinc content and lead and cadmium contents being equal to or less than 1.25 per cent and 0.1 per cent respectively, which are also on OGL, can be imported by units registered with the Ministry of Environment and Forests as recyclers having environmentally sound management facilities for reprocessing such wastes. Import of lead acid batteries, whole and crushed and lead ash is not allowed, in view of their potential to cause harm to human health and environment, if not handled in a scientific manner. However, import of any of these wastes is not permitted for dumping or disposal as per the provisions of the Hazardous Wastes (Mangement & Handling) Rules, 1989 as amended in 2000.

(c) No sir, the Ministry is not aware of any such petition in the Apex Court in this regard.